

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL OPORTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 705

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

DIA WASHDC

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 1 LINE 5 WA SELLOUT TO VICE OF)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MIL PO

SUBJ: VELOSO ON COMEBACK TRAIL

REF: A. OPORTO 279 (NOTAL) B. LISBON 6200

1. ONE WEEK AGO, RADICAL ELEMENTS OF "SOLDIERS UNITED WILL WIN" ORGANIZATION (SUV) ENDED ITS OCCUPATION OF OPORTO ARTILLERY REGIMENT (RASP) QUARTERS AS RESULT OF DIRECT MEDIATION EFFORTS OF ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF FABIAO. FABIAO'S COMPROMISE SOLUTION WAS GREETED AS SOMETHING OF A SELLOUT TO SUV WHICH UNDERCUT THE AUTHORITY OF NORTHERN MILITARY REGION (RMN) COMMANDER BG VELOSO. HOWEVER, THUS FAR THIS HAS NOT PROVED TO BE COMPLETELY THE CASE.

2. VELOSO HAS APPARENTLY SWALLOWED HIS HUMILATION STEMMING FROM FABIAO'S BLITZ VISIT AND SHOWS SIGN OF CONTINUING HIS LAW AND ORDER PROGRAM IN RMN. SINCE FABIAO'S DEPARTURE, VELOSO HAS HAD LENGTHY MEETING WITH RMN SENIOR OFFICERS, VISITED LISBON AND IS NOW BACK IN RMN QUARTERS WHERE MOOD SEEMS TO BE BUSINESS AS USUAL, VISITING BRITISH POLOFF FROM LISBON CALLED ON VELOSO
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OCT 20 AND RECEIVED IMPRESSION THAT VELOSO INTENDS TO STAY ON.

MEANWHILE, LOCAL COMMUNISTS AND SUV CONTINUE TO CRITIZE VELOSO FOR PERSISTING IN CAMPAIGN TO PURGE LEFTISTS IN RMN UNITS.

3. ANNOUNCED PLAN (REFTEL B) TO SPLIT UP SOME TROOPS OF DISBANDED MILITARY DRIVING CENTER (CICAP) BETWEEN TWO UNITS WELL OUTSIDE OPORTO AREA IS CONSIDERED TACTICAL VICTORY FOR VELOSO. ORIGINAL FIVE LEFTIST CICAP AGITATORS WHO VELOSO TRANSFERRED FROM UNIT REMAIN ON LEAVE. ACCORDING TO RMN SPOKESMAN, CICAP WILL ULTIMATELY BE RECONSTITUTED AT ONE AS-YET-TO-BE DETERMINED LOCATION.

4. A FEW CICAP SOLDIERS APPARENTLY CONSIDERED LOYAL TO VELOSO ARE GUARDING CLOSED CICAP QUARTERS IN OPORTO TOGETHER WITH GROUP OF ROTATING TROOPS FROM OTHER RMN ELEMENTS. RMN SPOKESMAN SAID THAT OPERATIONAL UNIT WILL BE SET UP IN CICAP AND HEADED BY MAJOR ARAGAO. FORMATION OF UNIT IS CURRENTLY "UNDER STUDAY." RMN SPOKESMAN EMPHASIZED THAT NEW UNIT WILL REPORT TO VELOSO.

5. COMMENT: VELOSO APPEARS TO BE MAKING STRONG COMEBACK. SOME SOURCES SUGGEST THAT VELOSO'S HANDLING OF THE RASP INSURRECTION IN RELATION TO FABIAO'S EFFORTS WAS DESIGNED TO DRIVE ANOTHER NAIL IN FABIAO'S COFFIN. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW COMMUNISTS AND SUV WILL REACT. THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT A MILITARY CONFRONTATION IN THE NORTH IS STILL IN THE OFFING.

PENNER

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